

## **Clean doesn't have a smell.**

Clean things don't smell and the fragrances we have come to associate with "clean" are just additives to the product.

The fragrances actually only mask the odor present, not eliminate it. The source of the odor has to be removed to remove the smell.

We "smell" things by actually breathing in microscopic amounts of the substance.

Many room freshener products on the market today are actually petroleum-based and may even be asthma triggers or causes. You wouldn't want to breathe gasoline, right?

There are cheaper ways to sanitize and deodorize than buying products with added scents and unnecessary chemicals.

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## **Asthma and Air Fresheners**



If someone in your home has asthma, it is important to maintain an environment that is free of cleaning products and air fresheners with strong fragrances and chemicals, which can trigger an asthma attack.

**Avoid** cleaning products with strong fragrances and chemicals.

**Alternatives:**

- Most home cleaning can be done with non-toxic alternatives with no added chemicals or fragrances.
- Vinegar and lemon juice are mild grease cutters.
- Lemon juice can bleach stains on most surfaces.
- Borax is a milder bleach substitute.
- Baking soda and salt are two mild abrasives.

**Avoid** smoke from cigarettes, candles, fireplaces, cooking. Don't smoke inside any home. Candles put smoke and soot in the air.

**Alternatives:**

- If you do get smoke from these sources, try swinging a damp towel through the room. The very small particles can actually be picked up by the towel, eliminating most of the odor.
- Open windows to let fresh air in, ventilation can blow offensive odors out the window.
- Smoky smells can be neutralized by spraying a mist made with a small amount of vinegar or lemon juice in water.



**Avoid** moldy and musty smells caused by mold or mildew.

**Alternatives:**

- Molds need food and moisture to grow. Fix leaks or dripping faucets.
- Keeping areas clean and dry (under sink cabinets, bathrooms, basements) can eliminate molds and their odors.
- Increase light and ventilation if necessary to minimize mold growth.

**Avoid** air fresheners for strong food, bathroom and body odors. Many added fragrances and perfumes are asthma triggers for some people.

**Remember:**  
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## Bathroom/Diaper Odors

- Bathroom odors will go away with good ventilation
- Ventilate with a ceiling fan or open window.
- Keep soiled diapers in a tightly closed container. Remove to an outside lidded garbage can as soon as possible.
- If you feel you need fragrance in your home, try natural scents. Cinnamon, cloves, and vanilla are common. Simmer any of these in water to add the aroma to the air. Orange, lemon or lime peels or slices can be simmered for a citrus scent. Keep some in a spray bottle that can be adjusted to a mist. Use this for a room freshener when desired.

- Bleach is a good sanitizer, but most people use too much. It only takes 1/2 capful for a gallon of water mixed daily to kill germs. This is also good to keep in a spray bottle to clean surfaces and won't leave a lasting smell in the air. In child care, DCFS does require that 1/4 cup of bleach per gallon of water be used for environmental surfaces (diaper changing tables, other tabletops and counters). The weaker solution is effective for use on toys, eating utensils, etc.

